

**Oral History Interview of  
Rebecca and Megan Kelley**

**Interviewed by: Elissa Stroman**

**April 10, 2019**

**Lubbock, Texas**

**Part of the:**

***General Southwest Collection Interviews***

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### Preferred Citation for this Document:

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### Recording Notes:

*Original Format:* Born Digital Audio

*Digitization Details:* N/A

*Audio Metadata:* 96 kHz/ 24 bit WAV file

*Further Access Restrictions:* N/A

*Related Interviews:*

### Transcription Notes:

*Interviewer:* Elissa Stroman

*Audio Editor:* N/A

*Transcription:* Elizabeth Groening

*Editor(s):* Kayci Rush

## Transcript Overview:

This interview features Rebecca and Megan Kelley as they discuss their mother, Jane Holden and her role as an archaeologist and anthropologist. In this interview the two sisters describe what it was like to be at an excavation site as kids and how moving to Canada impacted their mother. The two also explain their own education and what they have been doing with their degrees. They end the interview by discussing the Olive Holden materials that they brought to the Southwest Collection.

**Length of Interview:** 00:52:04

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### Keywords

Family life and background, Anthropology, Archeology, Academia, Holden

**Elissa Stroman (ES):**

Okay. So today's date is April 10, 2019. My name is Elissa Stroman. We are here at the Southwest Collection, interviewing two of Jane Holden Kelley's daughters. And I'm going to let them state their name for the recorder.

**Rebecca Kelley (RK):**

I'm Becky Kelley. I was born here in Lubbock. Currently, I live at Edmonton, Alberta.

**Megan Kelley (MK):**

I am Megan Kelley. I was born in Nebraska, and currently, I live in Calgary, Alberta.

ES:

And actually, can y'all give me dates of birth so that we've got that as well, if you don't mind?

RK:

Lubbock. March 26, 1959.

MK:

May 18, 1965.

ES:

Okay. So, the next lineage of genealogy, we would say, tell me your parents and their—some of their information.

RK:

You want siblings first?

ES:

We could do siblings first, if you'd like to do siblings. I have that next.

RK:

Parents and siblings. Parents. Mother, Jane Holden. Father, David Humiston Kelley. Mom was from Abilene, Texas, but lived in Lubbock most of the time after. And Dad was from Albany, New York.

ES:

How did they meet?

RK:

Harvard.

MK:

They were in a PhD program in Harvard in the 1950s together.

ES:

Okay. Then, if y'all want to say siblings now, so we can get that out of the way, the family unit.

RK:

So, in Lubbock, my younger brother was also born here. He was Thomas Michael Kelley. He died 1987.

MK:

Seven.

RK:

I have to do the math. I always track it back from my kid's birth.

MK:

And then, I have a twin brother, Dennis Walter Curry Kelley. He got all the family names. The rest of us didn't get any, but he—all his names are family. They're like, last chance, okay, there we go.

ES:

And then, okay. So, where do y'all want to go from here? You want to talk about family? Just childhood, and moving around, and your parents, and that sort of thing? Y'all can also dictate some of this. What would you like to talk about to start out with?

RK:

Childhood. That's fine. Actually, when we were born—when I was born, we were over closer to the Overton in a little shack. But we moved into the big house, Olive's house, when I was a baby. And my earliest memories are actually of that—in that big house on 20<sup>th</sup> Street. And my brother was born in that house. He came home to that house. So that's the house that Olive designed and Curry built. They lived in—my mom lived in until she was eight or nine. Want me to keep talking?

MK:

Well, it's—okay, if you're going the early years, because then—I mean, my parents—well, they were—I think my dad had a job teaching at Tech, but Tech had rules at the time that spouses can't be—it's the opposite of now. Then, it was against the rules for spouses to both be hired.

RK:

Nepotism. So mother couldn't get a job.

MK:

And, you know, my dad was from New England, so West Texas wasn't quite his cup of tea. Then, they moved to Nebraska from Lubbock.

RK:

In between, they actually did a—Smithsonian research to Montevideo. We were in Montevideo for—feels like forever. Six months, I think, which when you're little, that was forever. And poor mom travelled with us going from Lubbock. Dad went ahead. And my brother and I—so we were like one and three. And she was travelling by herself into Miami. I just sat down and my brother lay on the floor, and put his feet up on a column, refused to go anywhere. She was trying to get us on a plane. We were there for—like, I remember Montevideo. My brother got typhoid and so—and he wasn't allowed in the hospital, so they would come nurse. My parents were around the clock nursing and he had an IV in his foot, which I still see that, like him strapped into a crib with an IV in his foot. And they took us up and we did—went into some excavations outside of Montevideo. So we were there for quite a bit, and then we came back to Lubbock. And Lubbock, the family—because mom was an only child and my dad had a younger brother, so there wasn't lots of cousins or anything. It was Fran and Curry on the one side and Uncle Tom and his wife, Gladys. That was kind of our family. And occasionally, we'd get—other further kin would come. Like, Olive had a stepbrother and his son and his daughters would come through. Fountain, and Bonnie, and Kathy, and so we'd play with them. So there wasn't a lot of family. It was Fran and Curry and mom and dad here. And then, Kathy had some—came in much, much later, but Saint Pat. So, Pat Allgood was my step—my godmother. I get words mixed up. I go out another—and we called her Saint Pat. And she worked at the museum and did lots of things. She was an artist—sketches.

ES:

So it sounds like you had a lot of, like, elder support, but you didn't have a lot of kids. Like, when you were on a field sight, you would be the—were you the only kids that were—

RK:

Often, we were the only kids. Yeah.

ES:

So what was that? Tell me about—did you find ways to entertain yourself? Did they set you up, like, a little tent, or something, or—

RK:

Oh, we pretty much entertained ourselves, or we were assigned tasks. Many tasks. [Laughter]  
Mom really believed in, if you had children, they should be helpful.

ES:

So what were some of those tasks?

RK:

As we were older, on sights, it was doing surveys, or cleaning pot shirts, or flints, and get to label them. You'd get to draw them out, you'd get to mark where they came from.

MK:

Yes, and label obsidian, gypsum, and things with nail polish.

ES:

So, then y'all moved up to—Nebraska's the next step, right?

RK:

Nebraska's the next step.

MK:

Well, and they both—but again, it was more standard across the US, in universities, not to hire spouses. So, my dad got the job and apartment and mom, I think, got a job at the library. So they were both working. And she was also trying to finish up her dissertation. So, she was—and having kids.

RK:

Four kids. Little babies. She finished that dissertation when the kids, the twins, were little.

MK:

And then, I was born there. But then, in 1968, the University of Calgary, which was just really getting going then because a lot of Canadian universities were being opened, and expanding, and developing in the 1960s. And there was a huge—lots of Americans went north at that time, in '68, because the universities were desperate to hire people. So both of my parents got hired into the department of archaeology in Calgary. And I was three when we moved there, so I pretty well grew up there. I, obviously, have no memories of Lubbock, and almost no memories of Nebraska.

ES:

The Nebraska situation echoes what Olive and Curry had to do—were doing as well. So, Olive working in the library and Curry doing, kind of, the field work. It's an interesting little echo.

RK:

And that was how they got to Lubbock, right? Was the offer of a much better paying job and a university that was starting—a college that was starting. And that Olive could work at the library, so that was how they got here.

ES:

And Olive raising Jane, while also working, as well, so. Well, tell me more about—tell me just more about your mom, and her research, and what she was doing, and what y'all remember about that.

MK:

Well, when I was kid, but she was—I mean, she was obviously a little older. I mean, mom's first big research I remember was, as we were just saying, her research for what became the book, "The Yaqui Women," which was a more anthropological, less archaeological study of women because she thought that all the accounts to that point had been only talking with, sort of, the male leaders and things, and that the women would have very interesting stories to tell. And so, I mean, I have vivid memories of that. So, she was doing the research, like, in '69-'70, and then, we would go down in the summers to Tucson, and then, often crossover into Sonora, and talk to the—and she would be talking to these Yaqui women. And basically, we would just be running around, like, and with all the kids, and—

RK:

There were kids in the Yaqui villages and in Potam. There were kids, so we would—

MK:

We were just playing with them, so we were allowed to just run around and to do whatever. And yeah, it was hot, but it was fun. There were flash floods there and we didn't know any better, so we thought those were fun. [ES laughs] You could go swimming in the streets. Luckily, none of us or the other kids were ever hurt doing these kind of things. It was just, like, wow. And—

RK:

And the trips down into—into—across—into Vicam, Potam.

MK:

Well, and the border was no problem at that time. Basically, all one. It's such a difference now.

RK:

And she took a bunch of kids to the beach in Guaymas one time, right? She'd been doing the stories. She connected with these people. She'd met them with her father and—

MK:

Because you know, Curry first went in '36.

ES:

Right.

RK:

She had known them a very long time, and then started getting interested in telling their stories. So she—she had a way of building connections with people, which allowed her to be able to just drop in. And people would start to look for her. “Juana [?][0:13:01], you haven't been here in a year. Sit down, and let's get the updates, and we'll tell you what's been going on here.” And she kept, like, recipe cards that had the way everybody was related to each other in the bigger, broader Yaqui family across Arizona, and northern Sonora. And she was welcomed in by so many people and she would just drop in. It wasn't—and she didn't send telegrams. There wasn't the kinds of mail.

MK:

Well, nobody had cellphones or anything in those days, or emails. I mean, that's—people just dropped in.

RK:

So she would just go in, but she had a relationship with all of these people and she knew—she would always be able to ask about their parents, or their siblings, or their spouses, or their children, or their cousins. And then, she would go from, say, Arizona into Sonora, and say, “Oh yes, and I was talking with,” and sending greetings, or—and then, sometimes, she'd take—one time, she took a group of teenagers into the—out to the beach. Sometimes, into a market from the villages, like going to [inaudible] [0:14:25], and into the market. So—because we had a big old car.

MK:

But I mean, lots of anthropologists cultivate relationships when they're doing the research in stuff. And mom wasn't unique in this, but I mean, mom was one of the ones that she never stopped those relationships. So even when she was working in New Mexico, or down in Chihuahua in later decades, she never stopped going back, and checking in, and visiting with these women in Tucson—the Yaqui women in Tucson or Sonora. So she maintained those relationships and tried to keep up. And there was—on some kind of anniversary of the book—

and I think it was at the \_\_\_\_ [0:15:14], but anyway, so a lot of the—the Yaqui women weren't able to come, of the ones that were still alive, and mom was down there. And they were upset because she had had to change their names, not because she wanted to, but that was kind of the rules at the time. And they were like, "We told you all those stories and we want our names as credit." So, that was kind of interesting that they were kind of demanding that—

ES:

They wanted authorship. They wanted—yeah.

RK:

Ownership of their stories.

MK:

They're wanting people to know that it was their stories. And don't change the names to protect the whatever.

ES:

Was she—on the—like, on the anniversary, did they ever do, like, a reprinting, where she could rename them and actually—

MK:

I don't know if they've reissued. It's never been out of print, which is also interesting that it's stayed. You know, in academia, that's actually more uncommon than you'd think, too.

ES:

Yeah, exactly. So, how did she get—I'm just thinking logistics. How did she get—did the university fund this, so that, you know, basically every summer, or—

MK:

I have no idea.

RK:

No. She ran—well, for the—I don't know for the Yaqui stuff. I think I was too young. But later, when she was doing the research in New Mexico, the Capitan projects, and Chihuahua, she had grant funding for, and then she would always take—so if it was going to pay for her being able to be down in the southwest, then she would pay to go, and visit, and maintain her Yaqui pieces, right? So, she found ways of utilizing the grant funding she got to enable her to maintain those relationships.

ES:

That's amazing. In your childhood, when did you realize that your mom was doing something unique, and special, and different from other moms?

MK:

Well, that was straight off in the neighborhood in Calgary that we—that I grew up in. She was one of the only moms that worked, let alone, like, how she was working. So, Calgary, I think, like a lot of Texas has—there was a lot of oil and, kind of, different kind of culture. And so, a lot of people in the neighborhood, the wives, did not work and the husbands worked in business or oil.

RK:

Yeah, they played Bridge.

MK:

And mom worked, and so that was a noticeable difference right away because, you know, we—

RK:

But that was in our neighborhood. In 1975, International Women's Year, Margaret Mall. There was—the first time I'd seen those big pull-up displays. There was mom, advertising nontraditional careers for women. I don't know whatever happened to that. The university did it, but it was, you know, science. And get a doctorate, be a scientist. Yeah. It was—

MK:

Well, and once they were hired, both my mom and dad, at the department, mom was just better at running things, so my dad—so she became, like, the head of the department and was very good, even though she was the only woman there. Or perhaps—and you know, and it's funny because at the very end, some friends that are family friends of ours, asked mom in the hospice, "How did you cope with being the only woman?" Because she did have some friends in other departments who had very bad experiences. There was so much misogyny and some of them got driven out of the university because there was so much hostility from the male colleagues. But mom never had that experience. And she said—basically, she thought that, you know, whatever sexism was up there. I mean, it was amateur hour. She knew how to deal with it. I mean, she was raised in Texas.

RK:

Food, food.

MK:

She could handle how you deal with these things.

RK:

And hosting. Like, she built community with food. And she hosted parties, she would have faculty, she would have grad students, she would have other beyond her faculty, but out into other university, and have them so that they came to see her, respect her, not just as the diplomatic, good manager that she was, but also, like, competent and capable. Little food, a lot of drink.

MK:

You can go a long way with Texas hospitality.

ES:

Yeah. And I was thinking, as y'all were saying that, like women of that generation were reared in this kind of training of Tex—of hospitality, of managing a home, of managing a large family, and so it makes sense that that would translate into an academic realm. She knew how to handle people. She had been doing it with kids for a while.

MK:

Well, and yes. I was going to say—don't ever write this down in the whatever, but yeah. She did sometimes say that yeah, she sometimes managed colleagues when she was head, by thinking of how she dealt with her children.

ES:

Very nice, very nice. But it begs the question because I don't—and I'm sorry. I don't know her history as well as I should. I mean, Olive died when she was nine, right? So, and Olive had kind of a—she was working. So how did she—where did she learn all of this, kind of, maternal instinct?

RK:

Well, I think Olive was a very hospitable person who liked to entertain. I think that is very clear from both mom's stories and from—

MK:

Well, Uncle Tom says she was the best at hosting anyone. And he—yeah.

ES:

So even that brief time that she had her mom, she learned a lot.

RK:

And then, Fran. And Fran really worked hard at the hosting piece. So—

ES:

So—oh, go ahead.

RK:

So the model was there even—

MK:

And even when Olive died, I mean, one of the things, going through the papers, and the letters, and stuff, becomes very apparent is how many people in Olive's family were filling in the gap. And Curry's mother and father and so forth were all—and Uncle Tom never had any children, right? So there was a lot of support given to her and a lot of people who loved her and so that even with the loss of her mom and the problems, you know, that is probably, maybe common with a stepmother, she knew she had a lot of support and a lot of people who loved her and so that, I think, gave her some kind of foundation.

ES:

Can you tell me more about what she—how—I don't know. Her recollections of Lubbock, what she would say about Lubbock, or what she would say about her mom, or some of the stories that she liked to—and I mean, that could be, you know, hours. We could spend a lot of time on that, but some of the things that stand out.

RK:

She used to talk about high school. She liked going to high school because, you know, she was—not long after her mother died, sent to the convent school.

MK:

OLV, Our Lady Victory.

RK:

In Fort Worth.

MK:

And she really liked the nuns there.

RK:

She thrived in that situation. And it was when her father, Curry, figured out that she was [claps] embracing this.

MK:

Well, she was starting to talk about becoming Catholic.

RK:

And becoming a nun.

MK:

And becoming a nun because she said that those women were the coolest women she'd ever seen. Like, some of these nuns were smoking, and they were just—

RK:

They were smart.

MK:

They were so smart and educated. And so she just loved it.

RK:

She started smoking at convent.

MK:

But when she started talking about becoming Catholic, then, you know, all of a sudden, Curry just yanked her back out of the Convent.

RK:

And then, she spent time with his mother, with mama. So, she lived with mama back and forth a bit. And with Fran and Curry, on and off.

MK:

Well, and mom always said, growing up in the Great Depression, it was very different than dad's experience because—that because—I mean, they were poor and there were dust storms. And apparently, we're going to get one today. But that they were never worried about food because they had the farm, and so they would grow food. And so, they didn't have that—have that insecurity.

RK:

She always had milk. She always had chicken, eggs, there were vegetables. Whereas, dad growing up, his Depression experience was the family couldn't afford to stay together, and he ended up staying with his dad in a little one room and they ate a lot of potatoes and on a good week, they might get a hotdog or a slice of bologna.

MK:

And share it.

RK:

And slice it up and share it through the week. So his Depression experience and mom's were very different. Mom said that the bigger impact was that you didn't get any new clothes, and so you had—but mama was good at patching, darning, so that she was always neat, but she never got new.

MK:

And so, like, when dad went into World War II, he was so happy with the food. Like, they had Coca Cola and taco bars.

RK:

He got three meals a day.

MK:

And hot dogs. And he was just so excited about it. And a lot of people are not excited when they go into the army about the food.

RK:

But the food—it was the first time he had access to food that was—yeah.

ES:

Three square meals a day.

MK:

Oh, and mother tried to be—she took the training—where was that? Tried to be a 'Rosie the Riveter,' welding course.

RK:

She did take a welding course.

MK:

And they did pass her on the condition that she promised—

RK:

Never to do it.

MK:

Never to do it. [Laughter] That would not be helping the war effort.

ES:

She wasn't a neat enough welder, or a—

MK:

Yeah, and the war ended. She was just right at the age, where, you know, the war was ending when she went there.

RK:

So, she did do some—

MK:

But that was right in Lubbock somewhere.

RK:

Volunteering at—

MK:

The base.

RK:

Part of decommissioning the planes as they came back, out at the Air Force Base. So, she—yeah.

MK:

She didn't fly. She just did paperwork.

RK:

Paperwork? I thought it was planes. Yeah, I hadn't realized, until she talks about it, how many of those planes came through here as they were being decommissioned. Right? A lot of the paperwork was done here, so.

ES:

Yeah. That makes—and that makes sense because it was well established after that. What year did your parents marry?

RK:

Fifty-eight.

ES:

Okay. So there was—she did quite a lot—she did a lot of education—they met in the PhD program, you said, right?

MK:

Well—they were—

RK:

They may, actually, have met at a conference earlier than that.

MK:

But anyway, they were both at Harvard.

RK:

But they were both at Harvard. Harvard's really where they got to know each other and overlapped.

MK:

And they weren't studying the same things, but they—they over—yeah, their stuff overlapped at Harvard.

ES:

So tell me about your dad, what he studied and his interests.

MK:

Well, he went there to study—he went on the G.I. Bill, so that was something that, you know—a program that really worked for him because there's no way, before the war, he would've been able to follow through. But he had decided when he was seventeen that what he wanted to do was go study with this man called Tozer at Harvard University, who was a minor in archaeologist. He'd say, "That's what I'm going to do," and then once he came out of the war—

RK:

So he went—the army worked in his favor.

MK:

He showed up at the doorstep and he got his—talked his way into Harvard. And so, he did all his degrees there and it was just amazing because, again, wouldn't have been possible without the G.I. Bill, and his determination because, I mean, he absolutely was focused on studying there.

RK:

And he hitchhiked more than once from upstate New York, down into southern Mexico to do field work, right? And hitchhike back. There's a picture of him coming back one time with this massive beard and he shaved it off. And his brother, Charlie—so, in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, the family home—his brother, Charlie actually painted Mayan hieroglyphs on the wall in his room.

ES:

Wow.

RK:

Big.

MK:

So, and then, dad—I guess he wrote one of the early books on deciphering Mayan glyphs. So, yeah. That was back—

RK:

That was a long time ago.

MK:

A long time ago.

ES:

[laughs] It's amazing to me—as a researcher, a lot of people say, you know, “You're research is kind of autobiographical.” You know, you find your research topic early in life, whether or not you realize it. And it seems like, for your parents, it's kind of the same way. They knew by—you know, by at least teenage years, it was—the path was already kind of set.

MK:

No. No, no. Like, mom even thought a bit about medical school. But then, at Tech—and again, I don't know if this is a story that should be put on record.

RK:

Oh, it should be told. [ES laughs]

MK:

But in those days, they were—I don't know what you'd say—little? The rules weren't quite in place on how medical students would practice and stuff. And so, she knew that this was not her calling, so to speak, when the students were sort of encouraged to go out and get cats. Yeah. I don't need to go into detail. But it was a different time. And I think, probably, those kind of—there's [crosstalk] [0:30:38] of those loopholes. But she couldn't do that, so she knew that that was the wrong path.

ES:

Yeah.

RK:

Well, and I think she tried many things. I mean, she—she dated many people and often, they were the bad boys, Mexican boys. So, was that rebellion? Could've been rebellion. Was it her interest? Was it her ability? I mean, she'd gone to Mexico City. She loved Mexico City. She loved it. She—a year there? She loved it. She loved going into the field with her dad. But you know, children do sometimes try and find a different path than their parents.

ES:

Yeah.

MK:

But you're right. She did end up back.

RK:

But sometimes, you end up in places you—

MK:

Right back where she started. And yeah—I mean, the southwest, and I mean that in the broader sense of also across the Mexican border. So, from Sonora to Chihuahua, and West Texas, New Mexico, Arizona. That was the area that—

RK:

She loved. That was her heart.

MK:

Absolutely.

ES:

How did that impact her being in Canada? So, kind of, you know—if she—if her—her focus was always down here, but yet, she lived up there. Did it impact, like, how she decorated the house? Or how she talked about things? Or did she always, kind of, you know, longingly want to be in a warmer, dustier climate? Or did you notice anything like that?

MK:

No. I think she liked Calgary quite well.

RK:

She did. She came to like Calgary a lot. But it—she always had eclectic—eclectic tastes. And we did. We had \_\_\_\_\_ [0:32:28], Japanese, West Texas up on the wall. Our entire—pieces. And there were pieces, pots. It was eclectic.

MK:

It was a hodgepodge.

RK:

And so, but it was stuff that meant something.

MK:

And she always said that she almost left. Like, the first summer, when she moved to Calgary, in '68, in August, it snowed. It snowed in August. And she almost turned right around because she was like, "This is not normal." But it was just a freak—in Calgary, yes. It has snowed every month of the year. But it's always just—like a—almost just a flash, you know? It comes down and then—but it's gone within twelve hours or something. But that did not endear her to Calgary in the beginning. Like, she thought, what have I got myself into? Because—

RK:

But she really loved the people that she was working with. Like, she ended up—and over the years, they had such a wonderful group of faculty that they worked with and were just lifelong friends with. And it never stopped her from coming—like we—every summer, we would do treks. You know, New Hampshire, and New York, Texas. And as kids, it was not that uncommon for us to get split up. You know, dad and I were going to do a trek out to New Hampshire this year, and Mike was going to go stay with Kai, and the twins were going to be left with Fran and Curry for a bit, while she went to New Mexico, and then we'd all meet up somewhere else. Right? But we all connected in Texas, pretty much, every summer. And I was thinking, before we came down here, I haven't been here since 2015.

MK:

Thirteen.

RK:

[Pause] Thirteen. That's the longest I've ever gone. And before this—before this period, I'd never gone more than two years without coming home.

ES:

Um-hm. So it's—it's not a case where, you know, we ask you for your long forgotten memories of Lubbock. It's—this region is an ever present part of your history, in a way.

RK:

And this time, coming back in—when I landed, and got in at night, and we came on that interstate that now comes down to this Overton—the Overton and all of that development to the east of Tech, and I was like, this is not the Lubbock I know. But it took very little time the next

day to get over and go, this is the Lubbock I know. Right? I do know where I am. I know how to get around. It's just, this is—this is not—it's quite different than it used to be.

ES:

My dad went to school in the sixties here, and when we came up here when I was applying for grad school, and it was 2007, and Overton was growing, just starting at that point. I was like, this is not the town I know, you know? But—

RK:

Yeah. It's been interesting to watch that development on that side.

ES:

Um-hm. And the major roadways that have gone up the Marsha Sharp, and that sort of thing, so.

RK:

I avoid that. [ES laughs] But it's possible to avoid it.

ES:

It is possible, yeah.

RK:

Yeah, anywhere you go.

ES:

And it's—and traffic's still easily navigable in this town. So, we haven't talked about your—your history, like in your studies, or what you've done in your lifetime. And we're coming up on—we've got, maybe, fifteen more minutes. So, I feel like we should, at least, address—we've talked about your mom's research and stuff, and I'd like to hear about y'all's educational background a little bit.

MK:

Well. Possibly, like mom, I thought I could escape the vortex of academia. So, I mean, I did my undergrad, and then I travelled a lot, and was looking into doing other things. But then, I got pulled back into graduate school and I did a PhD in American History. So, I fell right into the family business, so to speak.

ES:

And what was your dissertation topic?

MK:

On Hollywood films and identity in the 1950s, postwar media.

ES:

Nice. And for the recorder, what are you doing now? Anything with that?

MK:

No.

ES:

[laughs] Okay.

RK:

I went and did a bachelor's degree in psychology, had kids, worked a lot, and moved north. I lived in Yukon. So, I moved from Calgary to Victoria, had my kids, moved to Yukon, and in Yukon, I worked in the childcare center. I've worked in childcare since I was a teenager, in and out. Ran a preschool program. The college, Yukon College, came through, and saw my program, and asked if I would teach for them. Coming from my family, I was like, no, I don't have qualifications to teach to college. And they kept asking me to do that, so I started teaching, and then I did go back for my master's, and I have been working in colleges, pretty much, since. So, I worked at Yukon College, teaching early childhood, but also women's studies and sociology. And then, moved to Calgary, in Bow Valley College, where I did—developed their early childhood program. But I also worked on building other human service career programs. So, I had a disability studies program, education assistant, mental health and addictions—I'm forgetting—First Nation's Metis and Inuit community support worker programs. So I built a lot of programs, and then I was recruited to go up to NorQuest College, where I got to start again with, you know, how would I like my early childhood to be? And to design a documentation lab, and a make-or-play lab, and a—a collaborative learning center with childcare. So, I've got a childcare center, an outdoor playground, a play-and-make lab, and a documentation lab. And then, I have been doing other program development. So, I have a community support worker program. Currently working on—it launches in the fall, a disabilities studies program, and education system program, and a childcare program. So, I like to build programs.

ES:

Sounds amazing, though. Yeah, we could spend another, like, you know two hours talking about all those programs and what that has done in the community and how that's—

RK:

Yeah. I really like that. I've always, also, done a lot of volunteer work. So, with early childhood educators of B.C. with the Yukon Childcare Association, and then, nationally with the Canadian

Childcare Federation, the Childcare Advocacy Association of Canada. And I'm currently the president of the Canadian Association for Young Children. So, I've always, sort of, been able to do both.

ES:

Well, and it—I always try to see, like, these broad themes of history. But your mom was always networking with communities and trying to make these connections. It sounds like you're doing a lot of that, too.

RK:

Yeah. Like, you have to find the programs communities want. Doesn't matter how good it is. If you can't get students to come in, it's not worth—

ES:

Right, right.

RK:

All your brilliant ideas are nothing.

ES:

Yeah. You don't want to be the lone cheerleader. You want support behind it.

RK:

Well, you can't keep it. Right?

ES:

Yeah.

RK:

If you don't get the students in, you don't have a program.

ES:

Um-hm. It's not sustainable. So, we have a couple more minutes. I think, maybe, the best way to talk—well, actually, Jennifer had one question she wanted me to ask y'all about, which was the work that your parents did. Some of the social outreach. And she mentioned, specifically, because she was looking at your mom's obituary and it said that she worked with the support group, the AIDS Calgary stuff. And she was—she said we should ask about your parents and what they did in that aspect as well.

MK:

Well, that was because our brother died of AIDS in 1987.

ES:

Oh my, okay.

RK:

So he was one of the early AIDS deaths in Canada. That was the beginning. And my parents tried desperately to understand how you could have a disease that was so devastating be so much of a surprise and be so hard to—have such social consequences.

MK:

Well, in '87, the—I mean, they were still in quarantine procedures at the hospital.

ES:

I was going to ask about that.

MK:

So that, like, nurses would wear full gowns, and masks, and everything. And so, that—there was a lot of need for education.

RK:

And support for parents.

MK:

And support communities. So, for other—so that quickly formed the AIDS support group of my parents and so forth. And they maintained those contacts.

RK:

Again, relationships developed early on that lasted through people's lifetimes.

ES:

Um-hm. Well, '87. That was still a time where there weren't a lot of drug options. I mean, there were no drugs. And the—

MK:

Well, no. AZT [**azidothymidine**] came out, but my brother didn't respond well to it. That was the only option because—well, it's like, imagine the early days of chemo, or something, where they could accidentally kill people, or something.

ES:

And I know that time period in the eighties, it was also an incredibly scary time because people were—I mean, since there weren't a lot of responsive—you know, there were—I forgot that AZT was there at that point. But people were dying rapidly, right?

RK:

And people were afraid. Like, other people were afraid. And one of the things that through family connections—when Michael was in the hospital, he actually talked to nursing students about what it felt like to be the patient. The other side of all those decontamination suits. To be the patient that has a big red X on your door because it was not very subtle.

MK:

And at that time, also, I mean, a lot of people—more people were dying of AIDS than were acknowledged. A lot of people would be simply—if you go back in the eighties, or wherever, and if you see pneumonia, or sudden heart failure, I mean, these were things that were put in place for people who simply did not want to acknowledge it.

ES:

Well, it's—

RK:

So they advocated. They spoke publicly about the need for support, not just—I mean, Michael was gone. But for anybody.

MK:

And the *Calgary Herald* ran a couple of big feature stories on the outreach AIDS and what it meant, at that time, in '87, so.

ES:

Okay. And then, the other thing that we wanted to make sure and talk about was, just in general, what y'all brought down, and the reason why y'all are here is the Olive Holden materials. And if you wanted to put anything on the record of some of the papers that you brought, or things that we should keep an eye out for, or anything generally.

MK:

Well, I think—they did write a lot of letters then.

RK:

[Laughs] And telegrams.

MK:

And telegrams. The telegrams are interesting. To me, the most interesting thing, as I said, was that it's all collected, still, probably because she died so young, and put all together all the condolence notes and the telegrams surrounding Olive's death because that really does give you almost a snapshot picture of even the language people used, how they responded, and who their entire social network was.

RK:

And there's clippings from—there's three different newspaper clippings. First, reporting her illness, and then reporting that she was—there'd been an upturn, and then, the downturn. Right? So it's kind of interesting to think that her health warranted newspaper articles and we had those clippings. And then, the context with the telegrams that was going back and forth in some of the notes, it really gives a picture of how broad the reach was.

MK:

And one of the things I found was frustrating with the letters is the people who were using nicknames and I couldn't figure out. I was trying to sleuth through some of this and I couldn't figure them out. Like, I was like, well—you know, [huffs] give me the cheat sheet so I'd know. Because I was trying to look at—like one of them that wrote, "Beautiful, beautiful," was El Brat, and I was thinking, this is a person. And then, I think my sister's quite right in saying, "That's probably short for 'little brat,'" because that was—would've been very common terminology, say, in the early thirties.

RK:

They had little—they talked about little brats, and brats, and bratito. Like all—there was kind of this terminology in use.

ES:

And I wonder, too, if that fed into the Koshari, the organization, because they often had nicknames in those.

MK:

But I found that frustrating because I was like—

ES:

Yeah, I would too.

MK:

I don't know who is writing these people.

RK:

She wanted it to be a person she could find. I don't think so.

MK:

So, yeah.

RK:

So my thought was that's probably Libby, but I could be completely wrong because I could see Libby talking like that.

MK:

Libby was such a character. She was.

RK:

Libby Brat.

MK:

I think, like, that generation of women, the ones we knew, were just so amazingly distinctive. Like, I think we've all become much more bland, and homogeneous, or something because they were just—you know, you would never confuse them, like, these different women. And one was Libby, who always had her hats and she was a real tough ranching woman.

RK:

Yeah. From Van Horn area.

MK:

From Van Horn. And one of Fran's best friends. And they were both roomed at the house with Curry and Olive, so they were in that house.

RK:

So they lived in that big house.

MK:

As students. But Libby, yeah. No, she was amazing. And then, like Lucille Ford.

RK:

Lucille Ford was interesting because—

MK:

I mean, you all most know her.

RK:

Her son died of AIDS, too, and so that became a different level of conversation later.

MK:

And he was working for the Reagan administration, so he was a good, solid Republican. And then, he died early on, too. And she—you know, she completely transformed. She was like—she was not happy with her party and she became a real amazing advocate. Like, she was one of the feistiest, amazing—and she was right here, in Lubbock, right?

ES:

Um-hm.

RK:

And Louise Maedgen. Louise Maedgen was a really interesting woman to sit and listen to. I don't remember—I only remember Louise. I know I met her son.

MK:

But anyway, none of those are in the boxes we brought.

RK:

Yeah.

ES:

[Laughs] That's okay.

MK:

The box that mainly—like, the big box of papers is mainly letters and stuff. And some of them, if you needed help, we would be able to, sort of, give you—you know? Oh, that's—like, there's a Judge France in Kansas, so we were able to figure out those connections. And LaLaine [?] [0:49:49] and stuff, so some of it, we were able to figure out. But the most frustrating, like I say, for me is they seem to use a lot of nicknames and that's not fair for the people who come later.

ES:

[Laughs] For the historians. But I guess that's the job of the historian is to track down these—to decipher that hieroglyph of nicknames.

MK:

So, yes. You can get right on that.

ES:

And the other thing that I noticed—you had mentioned on Monday, that were was—or whenever, that there was stuff from McMurry, from her time there? And then, I also—I just pulled out, like, there's a brochure for Westmoreland College, when she was in San Antonio, I guess, maybe. And so, there's also some pre-Tech stuff in there, as well. Pre-Lubbock.

MK:

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

ES:

So, okay. Yeah. [Laughs]

RK:

It's there and more will come.

ES:

Okay.

MK:

And what I'd like to find out more of, if—is the trip to Europe because I haven't been able to find any photographs or anything from that trip to Europe. And I was really hoping, like if I could send y'all the names of all the people who went, if maybe, you know, their families have contributed things and then we could—and then, you can really get—

ES:

Yeah. The one thing I can say is I saw that one of either the pallbearers, or the honorary pallbearers, was W.G. McMullen, and we have his—

MK:

Oh, Frances McMullen was one of Olive's best friends.

ES:

And we have home movies of him. And so, we have some of—we have his recordings.

MK:

Now, they went—she went to Europe with them in '36.

ES:

Um-hm. So, there may be—and I don't remember anything from Europe, and I'd have to go back and look for sure. And '30—I'd have to go back and look at the time period of the movies

that we have of his. And I think that's always—that's the frustrating part, as an archivist, is we've got so much stuff. We really just try to—

RK:

Yeah, how it connects the dots.

ES:

Yeah. We really just want to, like, make it available to researchers, and we want the research—but we want to take the time, too, to figure out all of these connections and interconnect them. But yeah, y'all are going to have to head out.

RK:

We have to run.

ES:

So, a tight schedule for today. But thank y'all so much for talking to me.

RK:

Oh, thank you.

ES:

And I will turn this off.

**End of Recording**

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